

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 09420 211608Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0376

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 9420

STADIS////////////////////////////////

EXDIS

FOR MATTHEWS NEA/EGY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MIL EG US
SUBJECT: MOVEMENT OF USSS BOULDER

REF: STATE 256801

1. I WAS INITIALLY PUZZLED AT REFTTEL SINCE I INTERPRETED REFERENCE THEREIN TO BOULDER "STAYING IN PORT UNTIL NOV 30" TO MEAN ISMAILIA WHERE THE SHIP IS BASED. I HAVE SINCE SEEN JCS 3770 WHICH MADE IT CLEAR THAT PORT SAID WAS TALKED ABOUT.

2. WHILE I CLEARLY WOULD NOT WISH TO HAVE THE BOULDER TRAPPED IN THE EVENT OF HOSTILITIES, I CONSIDER IT A SERIOUS MISTAKE TO KEEP THE SHIP IN PORT SAID. WHEN ARRANGING FOR BOULDER TO GO TO PORT SAID, WE TOLD EGYPTIANS IT WAS FOR 48-HOUR PERIOD SO THAT SHE COULD BE REPLENISHED BY DETROIT. FAILURE TO ABIDE BY WHAT WE SAID IS CERTAIN TO CAUSE EGYPTIANS TO SUSPECT USG KNOWS SOMETHING ABOUT HOSTILE ISRAELI INTENTIONS. IT WILL HAVE UNFORTUNATE EFFECT OF HEIGHTENING LOCAL TENSIONS AT THE VERY TIME WHEN WE HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH SOME SUCCESS TO REDUCE THEM. ADDITIONALLY, THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT MARSHAL ISMAIL SPECIFICALLY ASSURED GUAY THAT THE VESSEL AND CREW WOULD BE PROTECTED. FAHMY TOLD ME THAT THE MARSHAL PASSED GUAY'S QUESTION AND ANSWER TO PRESIDENT SADAT. UNLESS
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THERE ARE DEMONSTRABLE MECHANICAL OR ENGINEERING PROBLEMS

WHICH CAN BE SHOWN TO JUSTIFY BOULDER REMAINING IN PORT SAID FOR LONGER PERIOD, KEEPING HER THERE INSTEAD OF RETURNING TO ISMAILIA WILL BE VIEWED AS QUESTIONING THE MARSHAL'S AND GOE'S WORD. I HOPE THESE POLITICAL FACTORS WILL ALSO BE GIVEN DUE WEIGHT IN MAKING THE DECISION. THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR JCS TO ACT SHORTSIGHTEDLY.

3. I HAVE GOTTEN WORD TO CARROLL NOT TO DISCUSS HIS FUTURE PLANS FOR BOULDER WITH EGYPTIANS OR WITH OTHER FOREIGN OFFICIALS. HE HAD, OF COURSE, ALREADY TOLD THEM EARLIER THAT THE SHIP WOULD BE BACK IN TWO DAYS AND THEY KNOW THIS. ON BASIS OF MESSAGE FROM JCS, CARROLL ADVISES THAT THE BOULDER, WHICH WAS DUE BACK IN ISMAILIA TODAY, IS BEING KEPT IN PORT SAID. IN ORDER AVOID AROUSING EGYPTIAN SUSPICIONS, TRUST DECISION WILL BE REACHED SOONEST TO SEND BOULDER BACK TO ISMAILIA. EILTS

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Message Attributes

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